Obituaries

Adolph D. Leprotti

100; longtime resident; steam engineer

Adolph D. Leprotti

Adolph D. Leprotti, a former longtime resident of Wellesley, died Jan. 8, 2001, at St. Patrick's Manor in Framingham. He was 100.

He was the husband of Josephine (Tangerini) Leprotti, who died in 1999 at age 99. They were married for 76 years. In 1972 the couple celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with family and friends in Italy, and in July 1987, the Wellesley Townsman profiled them on the occasion of their 65th anniversary.

Mr. Leprotti was born in Cento, Ferrara Province, in northern Italy, son of Antonio and Rosa (Poppi) Leprotti. He served in the Italian Army during World War I.

Adolph and Josephine Leprotti were married in Welland, Ontario, Canada, in 1922 and then came to Wellesley later that year. He became a U.S. citizen in 1944, two years after his wife.

Mr. Leprotti worked in construction before becoming a steam engineer, employed at the Charlesbank Hotel and at Boston University. He was a life member of the National Association of Power Engineers.

The Leprottis lived in their Donazette Street home in Wellesley for 48 years before moving to St. Patrick's Manor in 1995. Their neighbors fondly remember the couple as surrogate grandparents to many in the neighborhood, and their garden was featured in the Townsman on April 28, 1988. They also corresponded frequently with their relatives in Italy, Canada, and the U.S.

No immediate family survives him.

A funeral Mass was celebrated at St. Patrick's Manor chapel on Jan. 12. Burial was in Woodlawn Cemetery, Wellesley.

Kenneth G. Haas

57; former managing director of BSO

Kenneth G. Haas

Kenneth Gregg Haas of Wellesley, former managing director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, died suddenly on Jan. 13, 2001, at Newton-Wellesley Hospital. He was 57.

Born in Washington, D.C., on July 8, 1943, he was a son of Eunice Dillon Haas of Palo Alto, Calif., and the late Philip Haas Jr.

Mr. Haas was raised in New York. He attended Columbia College, majoring in English and Comparative Literature, and received a bachelor of arts degree in 1964.

He began his work with symphony orchestras as assistant to the managing director of the New York Philharmonic, from 1966 to 1970. He produced the annual series of "Promenades" concerts at Lincoln Center and assisted in the general operation of the Philharmonic at home and on tour.

Prior to becoming managing director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Mr. Haas held the same position at the Cleveland Orchestra from 1976 to 1987. During his tenure in Cleveland, the orchestra established Chamber Music and Recital Series as well as a Department of Educational Activities, a Youth Orchestra, and several new outreach and education programs.

Mr. Haas was assistant general manager in Cleveland from 1970 to 1975, responsible for orchestra operations. He became general manager of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in July 1975 but gave up that post in July 1976 to accept the invitation to return to Cleveland as general manager.

A gifted administrator, Mr. Haas served as managing director of the BSO for nine years, from March 1987 to October 1996. His early retirement was precipitated by a severe health crisis brought on by cardiac arrest.

For the National Endowment for the Arts, Mr. Haas had served as chairman of the Challenge Grant (Music) Panel (1984-85) and co-chairman of both the Orchestra Panel and the Music Overview Panel (1982-85). From 1980 to 1982 he was chairman of the Policy Committee of the Managers of Major Orchestras of the U.S. and Canada and was a member of the Board of Directors of the American Symphony Orchestra League.

He had been a member of the Music Advisory Panel of the Ohio Arts Council and chairman of its Challenge Grant Panel; a trustee of Laurel School; and an advisory trustee of the Cleveland Institute of Music. He was a member of the National Advisory Committee of the Mandel Center for Non-Profit Institutions at Case Western Reserve University, an overseer of the New England Conservatory, and a director of the Boston-Fenway Program.

Besides his mother, he is survived by his wife, Signe Johnson Haas; three children, Elizabeth Haas of Cambridge, Amanda Haas of Los Angeles, Calif., and John Kenneth "Jake" Haas of Wellesley; a sister, Lenore Jones of Palo Alto, Calif.; a brother, Charles Haas of Oakland, Calif.; and two grandchildren, Sonia Leah Haas Joffe and Elijah Simon Haas Joffe.

A funeral service was held Jan. 17 at the Unitarian-Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills, with the Rev. David C. Boyer and Rabbi Donald J. Pollock officiating. Arrangements were by the J.S. Waterman and Sons-Waring Funeral Home, Wellesley.

Memorial donations may be made for Youth and Outreach Activities at Boston Symphony Orchestra, c/o The Development Office, 301 Massachusetts Ave., Boston, MA 02115.

Ralph L. Burns

70; former school custodian, scoutmaster

Ralph L. Burns *1949 photo*

Ralph Lawson Burns of Wellesley died on Jan. 9, 2001, at the Lahey Clinic in Burlington after a one-year battle with lung cancer.

Born in Waltham on Sept. 5, 1930, he was a son of the late Ralph M. and Ruth E. (Leonard) Burns.

Mr. Burns was raised in Wellesley and graduated from Wellesley High School in 1949.

During the Korean Conflict, he served as a corporal and received several citations, the Korean Service Medal, United Nations Service Medal, the Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation and the National Defense Service Medal.

A lifelong resident of Wellesley, Mr. Burns was active with the Boy Scouts of America, was an Eagle Scout, and served as scoutmaster in the Order of the Arrow.

Mr. Burns had worked for the Wellesley Public School System in the custodial department and the lunch program at Wellesley High School. At the time of his death, he was working as a bookkeeper for Captain Marden's in Wellesley.

He is survived by a brother, Robert W. Burns of Phoenix, Ariz.; a nephew, Steven R. Burns of Phoenix; two grand-nephews, Steven Wesley Burns and Noah Robert Burns; and a grand-niece, Devin Kylie Burns.

Services and burial in Woodlawn Cemetery will be private under the direction of the J.S. Waterman and Sons-Waring Funeral Home, Wellesley.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Lung Association, 25 Spring St., Walpole, MA. 02081 or the Boy Scouts of America, 2044 Beacon St., Newton, MA 02468.

Harry J. Coughlan Jr.

79; former resident, general contractor

Harry James Coughlan Jr. of Plymouth, formerly of Wellesley and Natick, died on Jan. 15, 2001, at the Kathryn Barton Nursing Home in Wayland after a long illness. He was 79.

Born in Northfield on April 7, 1921, he was a son of the late Harry James Coughlan Sr. and Frances (Clary) Coughlan.

Mr. Coughlan was raised in Wellesley, graduating from Wellesley High School in 1939.

He went on to serve in the U.S. Navy, attaining the rank of boatswain mate on the USS Harry Lee and the USS Cleveland during the Pacific Theater in World War II.

Mr. Coughlan was a general contractor in his family contracting business, Coughlan Construction Company in Boston and Canton. He retired in 1979.

His wife of 51 years, Shirley (Wilson) Coughlan, died in 1998. He was also predeceased by a brother, James Coughlan.

He is survived by his children, Susan O'Connell and her husband, Lawrence O'Connell, and Diane Coughlan, all of Natick; grandchildren, William and Tiffany Gillis of Goffstown, N.H., Erin O'Connell of Framingham, Christopher Gronberg of Havre de Grace, Md., Kimberly and Craig Gronberg, both of Natick; and his brother and sister-in-law, John and Lorraine Coughlan of Orleans.

Services and burial at Woodlawn Cemetery will be private. Arrangements are by the J.S. Waterman and Sons-Waring Funeral Home, Wellesley.

H. Chester Webster

Memorial service on Monday

A memorial service for H. Chester Webster will be held on Monday, Jan. 22, at noon at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Wellesley.

Known as "Chet," he died Jan. 7, 2001, at age 89. He was a resident of Wellesley since 1959 and was the husband of the late Winifred L. (Blackwell) Webster.

Mr. Webster had served as president and chairman of the board of Brookline Federal Savings and Loan Association, now Bay State Federal Savings, and at the time of his death, he was director emeritus. He had also served as president of the Federal Savings League of New England and as president of the Massachusetts Savings Council. He enjoyed golf and curling as a member of the Braeburn Country Club in Newton and was active with the Seventy-Six Club and the United Way.

Survivors include two children, Diane W. McMahon of Jupiter, Fla., and Warren H. Webster of Framingham; four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by a daughter, Cynthia Lee Webster.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Red Cross, 180 Rustcraft Road, Dedham, MA 02026.

A complete obituary appeared in the Jan. 11 Townsman.

Walter E. Lenk

76; former resident, social worker

Walter E. Lenk of Orleans, formerly of Wellesley, died Jan. 14, 2001, at Cape Cod Hospital, Hyannis. He was 76.

Born in Boston on June 26, 1924, he was raised in Belmont.

He graduated from Belmont Hill School and received a bachelor of arts degree from Bates College. In 1956 he earned a master's degree in social work from Boston University School of Social Work.

Mr. Lenk served with the U.S. Army in the European Theatre of World War II.

He was a resident of Wellesley Hills before moving to Orleans in 1987. He had summered in Chatham from 1964 to 1987.

Mr. Lenk worked as a professional social worker for the Veterans Administration before retiring in 1987.

He was a member and former treasurer and newsletter editor for the Cape Cod Postcard Collectors Club, and a member and former secretary for the Cape Cod Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society.

He is survived by his wife, Constance (Seeley) Lenk of Orleans; a son, Peter E. Lenk of Hopkinton; a daughter, Susan R. (Lenk) Gale of Ashland; and three grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Jan. 27, at 11 a.m. in the First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church in Brewster. Interment will be private in Orleans Cemetery. Arrangements are by the Nickerson Funeral Home, Orleans. There are no visiting hours.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Heart Association, 20 Speen St., Framingham, MA 01701.

Barbara A. Houlihan

76; retired saleswoman for Makanna

Barbara A. (Keohane) Houlihan of Needham, formerly of Wellesley Hills, died Jan. 11, 2001, in Avery Manor Nursing Home, Needham. She was 76.

Born in Brookline, she attended St. Joseph College in Connecticut.

Mrs. Houlihan was a resident of Wellesley for 40 years. Before retiring, she had worked as a saleswoman for Makanna of Wellesley for 44 years.

She was the wife of the late Charles D. Houlihan; mother of Charles D. Houlihan Jr. of Simsbury, Conn., Frank D. Houlihan of Mashpee, and Barbara A. Houlihan of Framingham; sister of Agatha Carroll of Wellesley Hills, Patricia Keohane and Laury Keohane, both of Brookline, Joseph Keohane of Barnstable, Marie Finnegan of Harvard, Frank Keohane of Framingham, and the late John and Thomas Keohane. She also leaves two grandchildren, Meghan and Brenna Houlihan, both of Simsbury.

A funeral Mass was celebrated on Jan. 15 in Mary Immaculate of Lourdes Church, Newton Upper Falls. Interment was in Holyhood Cemetery, Brookline. Arrangements were by the George F. Doherty & Sons Funeral Home, Wellesley.

Memorial donations may be made to Visiting Nurse Association, 1100 High St., Dedham, MA 02026.

Alice B. Mercer

72; longtime resident; full obit next week

Alice (Bain) Mercer of Wellesley died Jan. 17, 2001, at her home. She was 72.

Born in Short Hills, N.J., on Dec. 19, 1928, she was a daughter of Edgar and Helen (Cram) Bain. She graduated in 1950 from Wellesley College.

Mrs. Mercer was a resident of Wellesley since 1950.

She is survived by her husband of 47 years, Allan M. Mercer; three children, Anne J.M. Stiffler of Poulsbo, Wash., Elizabeth Bain Kafig of Owings Mills, Md., and Stephen A. Mercer of Rochester, N.Y.; and two grandchildren, Katy and John Stiffler.

A complete notice and photo will appear in next week's Townsman. Arrangements are by the J.S. Waterman and Sons-Waring Funeral Home, Wellesley.

Sarah N. Hughes

95; former resident, college employee

Sarah (Noone) Hughes of Natick, formerly of Wellesley, died Jan. 10, 2001, at the Brittany Health Care Center in Natick. She was 95.

Born in Ireland, she was the daughter of the late Peter and Delia (Connolly) Hughes.

Mrs. Hughes had been a longtime resident of Wellesley before moving to Natick 18 years ago. She was the wife of the late Patrick Hughes, who died in 1952.

For many years, Mrs. Hughes was employed in the food services department of Wellesley College. She was a member of the Natick Senior Center.

Survivors include seven sons: Joseph E. of Highland, Calif., Robert P. of Natick, John J. of Clinton, Edmund C. of Florida, Francis M. of Winchendon, Richard J. of Wellesley, David P. of Manchester, N.H.; two daughters, Sarah Poisson of Merrimack, N.H., and Rosemary Suttil of Natick; 22 grandchildren and 30 great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

A funeral Mass was celebrated in St. Patrick's Church, Natick, on Jan. 13. Arrangements were by the John Everett and Sons Funeral Home, Natick.

Registering for World War II memorial

Anyone who served in the armed forces during World War II, and anyone who helped in the war effort on the home front, is eligible to have his or her name included in the national Registry of Remembrances for the national World War II Memorial.

A registration form is available at the Veterans' Services office in Town Hall, and local residents may register their names, family members' or friends' names free of charge. For information call 431-1019, ext. 209.

Financial contributions to support the memorial may be sent to the World War II Memorial Fund, American Battle Monuments Commission, attention GR048, P.O. Box 96074, Washington DC 20090-6074.

Obituary information

The Wellesley Townsman prints obituaries of residents or former residents free of charge. Information is generally provided by a funeral home. Notices may be delivered to the Townsman, One Crest Road, or faxed to (781) 431-2001. Photographs may be submitted for publication with an obituary. For information call 431-2000.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Hearts in Bloom campaign under way

The American Heart Association is looking for volunteer company coordinators to participate in the Hearts in Bloom worksite flower-selling campaign. The annual campaign raises money to support lifesaving heart and stroke research. Eastern Connection will deliver the flowers to participating companies on Feb. 12. For more information on how to become a company coordinator, call Susan Ohm at 1-800-662-1701, ext. 3129.

Drivers needed for cancer patients

The American Cancer Society seeks volunteers to drive cancer patients to their treatment appointments. Volunteers need to have a reliable car and availability during business hours. Drivers are needed for the society's Charles River Unit. The Charles River Unit comprises Wellesley, Weston, Needham, Westwood and Dedham. For more information or to volunteer, call (800) ACS-2345.

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